

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Claims:**

1. (canceled)
2. (previously presented) A microscope comprising at least one ocular lens, at least one objective lenses and a microscope stage assembly which in turn has a stage planar surface,

said stage assembly comprising:

means for attachment to a frame of the microscope so that the planar surface is essentially perpendicular to an optical path through a center of the objective lens; and

an object holder for holding an object for examination by the microscope;

means for moving the object holder relative to the optical path so that a held specimen moves in a  $z$  direction parallel or coincident with the optical path said means comprising at least one rotatable focusing knob attached to a pinion to move a rack that moves the stage in the  $z$  direction; and

means for moving the object holder in an  $x$  or  $y$  direction perpendicular to the  $z$  direction so that a held specimen moves through the optical path parallel to the planar surface, said means for moving the object holder comprising an  $x$ - $y$  control having coaxial  $x$  and  $y$  control knobs, said  $x$ - $y$  control being mounted so that the rotational axis of the  $x$  and  $y$  control knobs intersect a rotational axis of the rotatable focusing knob of the microscope, when the optical path passes through a center of a specimen holding area of the object holder.

3. (original) The microscope of claim 2 wherein the means for attachment comprises a mounting bracket connected between the frame and the stage with attachment screws.

4. (original) The microscope of claim 3 wherein the means for moving the object holder comprises a means for moving the entire stage.

5. (original) The microscope of claim 2 wherein the means for moving the object holder comprises a pinion rotatably attached to the stage that engages with a rack rigidly attached to the frame so that rotation of the pinion moves the stage relative to the frame.

6. (original) The microscope of claim 5 wherein the rack is rigidly attached to the frame by means of the mounting bracket.

7. (original) The microscope of claim 5 wherein the control knob is attached to the pinion so that rotation of the control knob rotates the pinion to move the stage.

8. (original) The microscope of claim 2 wherein the means for moving the object holder comprises a means for moving the object holder relative to the planar surface of the stage .

9. (original) The microscope of claim 8 wherein the means for moving the object holder comprises a belt loop attached to the object holder that passes around pulleys rotatably mounted to the stage wherein said cable attachment to the object holder is located between said pulleys.

10. (original) The microscope of claim 9 wherein the control knob is attached to one of said pulleys so that rotation of the control knob rotates the pulley to move the belt and attached object holder relative to the planar surface of the stage.

11. (original) The microscope of claim 4 wherein the means for moving the object holder further comprises a means for moving the object holder relative to the planar surface of the stage.

12. (original) The microscope of claim 11 wherein the means for moving the object holder relative to the planar surface of the stage comprises a belt loop attached to the object holder that passes around pulleys rotatably mounted to the stage wherein said belt attachment to the object holder is located between said pulleys.

13. (original) The microscope of claim 12 wherein a control knob coaxial with the first control knob is attached to one of said pulleys so that rotation of the second control knob rotates the pulley to move the belt and attached object holder relative to the planar surface of the stage.

14. (original) The microscope of claim 13 wherein the first control knob rotates the pinion so as to move the stage in a direction perpendicular to the rotational axis of the focusing knob.

15. (original) The microscope of claim 14 wherein the second control knob rotates the pulley so as to move the object holder in a direction parallel to the rotational axis of focusing knob.

16. (canceled)

17. (original) The microscope of claim 2 wherein the microscope has stereo oculars and the rotational axis of the focusing knob is parallel to a line through the center of the oculars.

18 -21 (canceled)